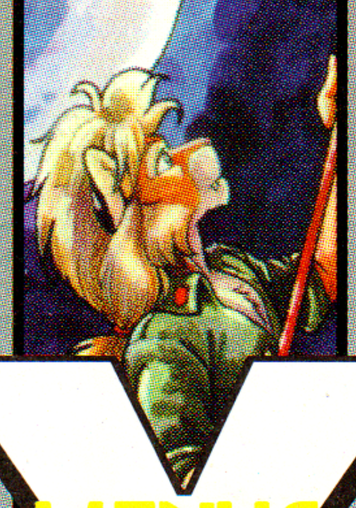

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KATMANDU

ADULTS ONLY

Carole Curtis & Terrie Smith's

Katmandu

TERRIE SMITH '94

ANTARCTIC Blast
APRIL 1994

MEDICAL RECORDS

Who is this guy? I recently found out that we released our 200th title. Not bad for a so-called "independent" company, but there was not much celebration at the Antarctic Press office. In fact, I think it went totally unnoticed except by our ever-so-obsessive-compulsive office manager. This company has reached notable milestone after milestone beyond anybody's (even our own) expectations and without much bru-ha-ha. The reason there hasn't been much celebration about our accomplishments at Antarctic Press is because everybody at AP realizes that there is more to be done. What is our goal? Money? We certainly are not raking in the big bucks, but with good management we stay afloat. Respect? While we may have gotten some recognition in some circles, the reality is the mainstream periodicals do not recognize us. To fill a niche? While we do fill a niche, it is about one of the most difficult niches to fill.

Everybody has their own personal goals and agendas. I know my goal is to release the type of comics that I like and enjoy reading and I hope that other people will enjoy reading them as well. What is the personal goal of everybody that has worked for Antarctic Press? I have no idea. But I do know that there is a feeling that more needs to be done for the comic industry and we're going to try to do it. The meshing each of our personal agendas to a common goal is the most important milestone in our nine-year history. While we may eventually completely fill the niche or get the respect or obtain the money so people do not have to ask the question, "Who is this guy?", we will have accomplished each of our goals by working with each other at Antarctic Press and because our distributors, retailers, and (most importantly) our readers who have supported us in an industry that is harsh and unforgiving.

Thanks, everybody for helping us reach our many milestones. I look forward to reaching many more with you.

Sincerely,
Joe Dunn

*PS - So, what was our 200th book? It was **Mangazine #30**, which hit the shelves in late February. It is quite fitting, actually - **Mangazine** was the very first book that Antarctic Press published, way back in early 1985. Our 300th book will be published later this year.*

☑ CHECK OUT ANTARCTIC PRESS' other releases

Release dates subject to change.

- ☐ **Amazing Strip #3** • by Ippongi Bang • 32 pages • $2.95 VENUS.
- ☐ **Bondage Fairies #2** • by "Kondom" • 32 pages • $2.95 VENUS
- ☐ **DNAgents Special** • by Will Meugniot and Mark Evanier • 40 pages (8 in color) • $3.50.
- ☐ **Fantastic Panic #5** • By "Ganbear" • 32 pages • $2.75.
- ☐ **Furrlough #16** • 32 pages • $2.75.
- ☐ **Girls of NHS 1994** • 64 pages • $3.95.
- ☐ **Golden Warrior Iczer One #1** • by Toshihiro Hirano • 32 pages • $2.95.
- ☐ **Gold Digger #10** • 32 pages • $2.75.
- ☐ **Hitomi: Geohammer #5** • 32 pages • $2.75.
- ☐ **Katmandu #3** • 32 pages • $2.75.
- ☐ **Sentai #2** • 32 pages • covering Power Rangers • $2.95.
- ☐ **Silbuster #4** • by Ikkou Sahara • 32 pages • $2.95.
- ☐ **Strangers in Paradise #1 (2nd printing)** • 32 pages • $2.75.
- ☐ **Tigers of Terra v2 #4** • 32 pages • $2.75.
- ☐ **Velvet Touch #3** • FULL COLOR • 32 pages • $2.95 VENUS.
- ☐ **Wild Life #6** • 32 pages • $2.75.

WORDS FROM A HIGH-ER PLANE

Egads, April already? Here's some information about current and upcoming books -

In April we debut our newest translated manga title, **Golden Warrior Iczer One!** Written and drawn by Toshihiro Hirano and Moriki Yasuhiro, **Iczer One** is a five-issue miniseries based on the popular Original Video Animation. Be sure not to miss it!

Also in April is the fan-favorite **Girls of Ninja High School** annual. This year we are featuring 64 pages jam-packed with stories by a ton of artists, both new and old.

Don't forget to check out the return of **DNAgents**. You heard right - the original superhero team is back for a special appearance at Antarctic Press. All new stories, all new art, and all new characters from the minds of Will Meugniot and Mark Evanier. This 40-page comic includes a special 8-page full-color pull-out section.

Now, some sad news - **Twilight-X** #6, #7, and #8 (scheduled for November, December, and February) have been cancelled. An all-new **Twilight-X** series (all new art, new story, new format, and new name) will return in August of this year.

Also, **Ninja High School Talks About Drugs** (scheduled for December) and the **Ninja High School Limited Edition Card Set** (scheduled for January) have been cancelled. Simply put - we bit off more than we could chew. We decided to spend the time that we would have spent on those two projects working on the regular **Ninja High School** series (returning in June) instead. We are planning on coming out with the **NHS Card Set** sometime in late 1994 or early 1995.

See ya'll next month!

- **Matthew High**
(AP's Matt)

CORRECTIONS:

- The cover to Quagmire USA #1 came out a little greener than it should have. Sorry for the mix-up.
- The cover to Silbuster #1 incorrectly listed the artist's name as "Kazumitsu" Sahara. His correct name is "Ikkou" Sahara. The reason for the error is too lengthy to explain here, but trust us - "Ikkou" is correct.

PAT'S PRODUCTION NOTEPAD

As I promised you last month, here's the list of conventions AP folks will be at:

Project A-Kon V, June 3-5 TX.
Silicon Origins, July 7-10 CA.
Otakon, July 29-31 PA.
San Diego ComicCon, August 4-7 CA.

Anime America and Anime Expo are both tentatively scheduled as well, but we're waiting for confirmation on the dates. Next Month: I'll clue you in on how to send your submissions to us!

- PAT

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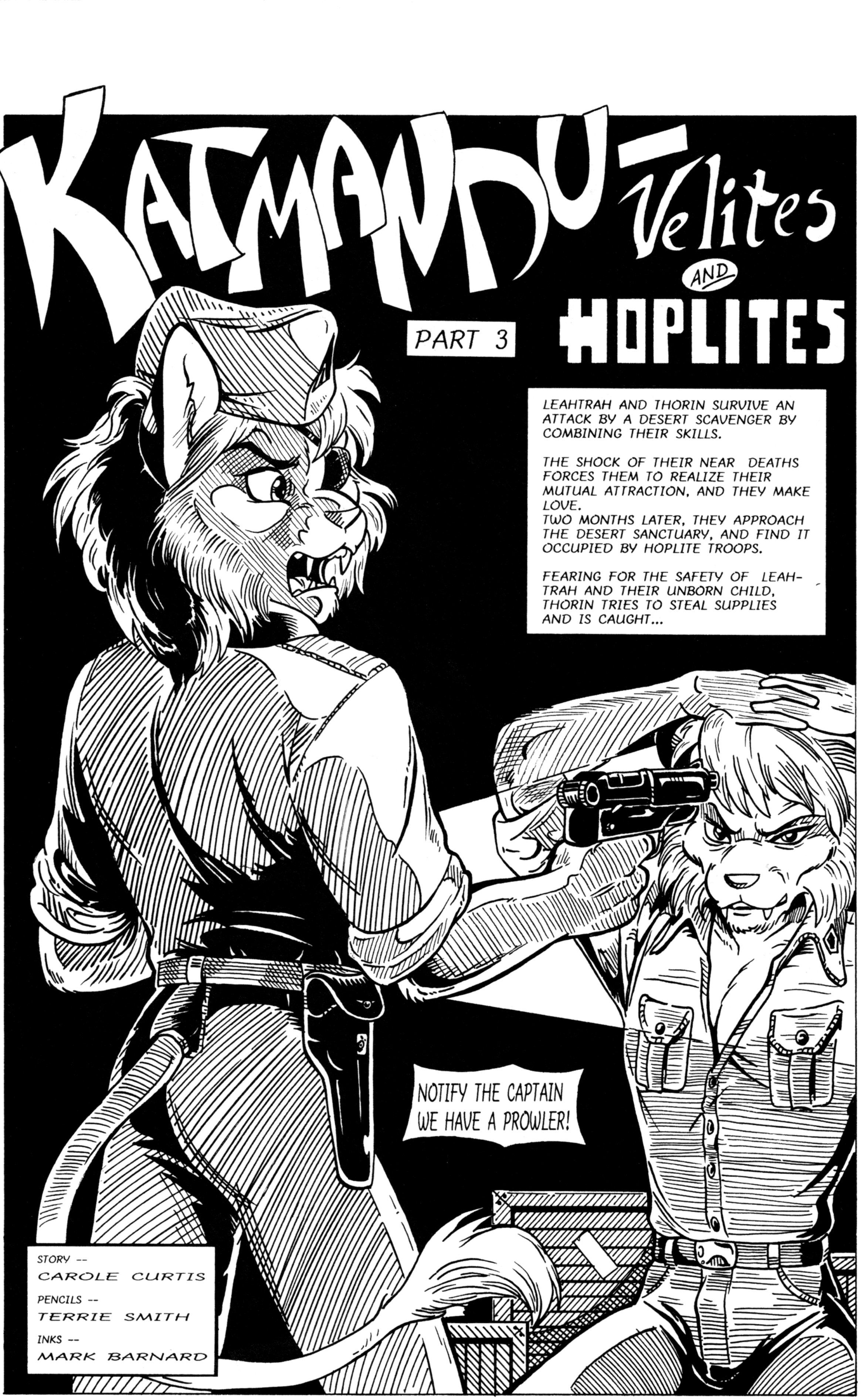
KATMANDU Velites AND HOPLITES

PART 3


LEAHTRAH AND THORIN SURVIVE AN ATTACK BY A DESERT SCAVENGER BY COMBINING THEIR SKILLS.
THE SHOCK OF THEIR NEAR DEATHS FORCES THEM TO REALIZE THEIR MUTUAL ATTRACTION, AND THEY MAKE LOVE.
TWO MONTHS LATER, THEY APPROACH THE DESERT SANCTUARY, AND FIND IT OCCUPIED BY HOPLITE TROOPS.
FEARING FOR THE SAFETY OF LEAH-TRAH AND THEIR UNBORN CHILD, THORIN TRIES TO STEAL SUPPLIES AND IS CAUGHT...
NOTIFY THE CAPTAIN WE HAVE A PROWLER!
STORY -- CAROLE CURTIS
PENCILS -- TERRIE SMITH
INKS -- MARK BARNARD

TO OUR MOTHERS AND THEIR LOVES -- RAE & ED AEBERLI AND MAGGIE & GEORGE REED

CAPTAIN? SIR?

WHAT IS IT?

SIR, WE'VE CAPTURED A THIEF. HE'S POSSIBLY A DESERTER FROM ANOTHER UNIT. HE WAS STEALING FOOD FROM THE STOREROOM.

PUT HIM IN A HOLDING CELL. I'LL GET DRESSED.

WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND OUT, SERGEANT?

NAME AND RANK ARE ALL HE'S TELLING. HE'S OBVIOUSLY ONE OF OURS, THOUGH.

HELLO, SOLDIER. STRANGE EVENING FOR FORAGING. HAVE A CUP OF COFFEE AND WE'LL TALK.

HOW DID YOU COME TO BE OUT HERE ALONE?

MY UNIT AMBUSHED A VELITE CARAVAN. A SANDSTORM CAME UP AND I WAS SEPARATED FROM MY COMMAND. I WAS INJURED -- YOU CAN STILL SEE THE SCARS. WHEN I CAME TO, EVERYONE LEFT WAS DEAD.

WHY DIDN'T YOU GO DIRECTLY BACK TO YOUR LINES? WHY COME HERE? WE'RE QUITE A DISTANCE FROM HOPLITE TERRITORY!

I WAS INJURED -- HAD A CONCUSSION. I REMEMBERED WHERE AN OASIS WAS, IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SANCTUARY. BY THAT TIME, I WAS CLOSER TO HERE THEN OUR LINES.

IF THAT'S SO...

WHY DID YOU BREAK IN, INSTEAD OF ASKING FOR AID?

EVERYONE'S SCURRYING AROUND! LOTS OF LIGHTS!

THORIN MUST HAVE GOTTEN CAUGHT. I HAVE TO GET HIM OUT OF THERE...

...BUT I CAN'T BE CAPTURED! THORIN WOULD WANT HIS FAMILY LINE TO CONTINUE.

PERHAPS WITH THE BAUBLES WE TOOK FROM THE RAT, I CAN FASHION A DISGUISE TO DISTRACT THEM.

SERGEANT? SOMEONE'S APPROACHING.

WELL, WE'RE THE ONLY GUESTS HERE, BUT SANCTUARY IS OPEN TO EVERYONE. QUESTION THEM WHEN THEY GET HERE -- POLITELY!

PARDON MY STARING, CORPORAL ROZAN. I LOST MY RIDING LIZARD IN A SANDSTORM A WEEK AGO, AND IT HAS BEEN A MONTH SINCE I LAST SAW A MALE -- MUCH LESS A...COMELY...ONE. I AM LIANA, A DANCER.

WELCOME, STRANGER, TO SANCTUARY. I AM CORP. ROZAN, 115TH. DIVISION, HOPLITE ARMY. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS.

A...DANCER?

YES. I WAS ON MY WAY TO CROZET. I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO SEE YOUR LIGHTS, AND MADE MY WAY HERE.

YES, WE WERE BUSY LAST NIGHT. UH, WHAT KIND OF DANCER ARE YOU?

I PERFORM NATIVE, FESTIVE, AND EROTIC DANCES! PERHAPS I COULD SPEAK TO YOUR COMMANDER -- REGARDING A PERFORMANCE HERE?

WELL, THORIN LEONIUS, WHY DID YOU BREAK INTO OUR STORES?

I WASN'T SURE WHO WAS HERE. I HAD LOST MY FIELD GLASSES. I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT ANYONE, BUT I WAS STARVING!

KEEP HIM UNDER GUARD. WE'LL RADIO COMMAND AND CHECK HIS STORY.

CAPTAIN, WE HAVE A VISITOR. THIS IS LIANA, A DANCER. SHE WISHES TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT PERFORMING FOR DONATIONS.

THE SERVICES OF MUSICIANS, IF YOU HAVE ANY TALENTED MEN; AND A FEW HOURS' REST.

MISTRESS LIANA, MY MEN WOULD TRULY ENJOY WHATEVER ENTERTAINMENT YOU MIGHT PROVIDE. WHAT WOULD YOU REQUIRE?

OH. AND IF YOU COULD SHOW ME TO THE RECTOR OF SANCTUARY...? I LOST MY COSTUMES IN THE DESERT. PERHAPS THEY COULD LOAN ME SOME MATERIALS.

OF COURSE. FOLLOW ME. I'M SURE WE CAN ARRANGE SOME FORM OF PAYMENT.

I HOPE I'M NOT TAKING YOU AWAY FROM ANYTHING IMPORTANT.

OH, NO. JUST QUESTIONING A DESERTER FROM ANOTHER UNIT.

PRAY TELL, CAPTAIN, WHAT IS THE PENALTY FOR DESERTION? I WOULD HATE TO HAVE A SHADOW DEPRESSING YOUR MEN WHEN I PERFORM FOR THEM.

BUT REACHING OUR HEADQUARTERS IS DIFFICULT. WE WILL PROBABLY NOT RECEIVE CONFIRMATION UNTIL EVENING. DO NOT WORRY. WE'LL TAKE NO ACTION UNTIL AFTER YOUR PERFORMANCE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

TO BE SURE, OUR PRISONER WILL PAY WITH HIS LIFE IF OUR SUSPICIONS ARE CORRECT.

MASTER SCARABUS, I BROUGHT YOUR DINNER.

DID YOU FIND OUT WHAT THE COMMOTION WAS?

WE HAVE A VISITOR TO SANCTUARY. AN EXOTIC DANCER WHO WISHES TO SPEAK TO YOU.

WELL, NOW! THAT'S INTERESTING!

DON'T FORGET YOUR VOWS! SHE'S JUST OUTSIDE THE DOOR. I'LL LET HER IN.

HOW MAY WE BE OF SERVICE, MISTRESS LIANA? COME, SHARE MY DINNER AND BE WELCOME.

FATHER, THE INTRUDER WHO WAS CAPTURED LAST NIGHT? HAS HE CLAIMED SANCTUARY?

NO, THE HOPLITES ARE KEEPING HIM SECLUDED.

FATHER, MY REAL NAME IS LEAHTRAH MIDDLESMITH. THE PRISONER IS -- MY INTENDED HUSBAND, AND I AM CARRYING OUR CHILD.

OBVIOUSLY THERE IS MUCH DECEPTION HERE. I DO NOT APPROVE OF SUCH IN SANCTUARY. IT VIOLATES THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THIS HOLY SITE!

I AM SORRY, FATHER.

SANCTUARY IS HOLY TO THORIN, AND TO MYSELF AS WELL. THERE... THERE IS NOWHERE ELSE FOR US TO TURN.

AND HOW IS YOUR HUSBAND TO PERFORM THE RITUAL OF SANCTUARY BEFORE MYSELF AND A WITNESS? HE IS THE 'PROPERTY' OF THE VISITING HOPLITES. IF THEY WISH TO DENY US ACCESS TO HIM, THEY ARE WELL WITHIN THEIR RIGHTS TO DO SO.

I WILL CREATE A DISTRACTION AND LURE HIS GUARDS AWAY.

I PROMISE THAT THORIN AND I WILL COMMIT NO ACTS OF VIOLENCE.

IF VIOLENCE IS YOUR DISTRACTION, WE WILL **NOT** GO TO HIS CELL.

I BELIEVE YOU, BUT TO INSURE THE SAFETY TO SANCTUARY, YOUR HUSBAND WILL TAKE HIS VOWS FIRST. THEN **YOU** WILL WILL BE PERMITTED TO DO SO.

HO-HO! WAKE UP WANDERING CUB! GOT A NOURISHING BEEF STEAK FOR YOU! BETTER THAN WE'RE HAVING!

HA! THAT'S ME, CUB. I'M CORPORAL BEDLOE.

HMM. IT'S GOOD. BETTER THAN I'VE HAD IN FOUR MONTHS. MY COMPLIMENTS TO THE COMPANY COOK.

PARDON MY TABLE MANNERS. I COULD GROW FAT ON THIS.

I SUPPOSE.

BUT HEY, THAT'S THE RISK WE TOOK WHEN WE ENLISTED.

AFRAID YOU WON'T GET THE CHANCE. IT'S THE TRADITIONAL 'LAST MEAL.' THE CAPTAIN EXPECTS WORD ON YOU TONIGHT.

STILL, I WISH YOU AND I COULD JOIN THE REST OF THE BATALLION, TONIGHT.

WHY?

THIS EXOTIC DANCER -- A LITTLE VELITE FEMALE -- IS ENTERTAINING TONIGHT.

A VELITE, YOU SAY?

DON'T WORRY. I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF OF HER WEAPONS. SHE'S WELCOME TO ASSAULT ME WITH THOSE!

AREN'T YOU COMING TO MY PERFORMANCE?

CORPORAL? ♩

I WISH, MADAME LIANA!

THIS DOOR LOCKS, DOESN'T IT? LOCK IT AND CHAIN HIM. YOU DON'T REALLY WANT TO MISS THESE, DO YOU?

PERHAPS...YOU'RE RIGHT. BESIDES, THE CAPTAIN DIDN'T ORDER CLOSE GUARD.

I THOUGHT NOT.

YOU STAND IN THE BACK OF THE TENT, AND YOU'LL NOT BE SEEN. I'LL BE SURE YOU GET A GOOD VIEW.

ANYWAY, HE SEEMS TOO WEAK AN INDIVIDUAL TO ATTEMPT ESCAPE. PERHAPS HE'S ONE OF THOSE 'MEN' MY SKILLS WOULD NOT AFFECT.

WHAT IS LEAHTRAH UP TO?

THORIN LEONIUS. DO YOU WISH TO CLAIM YOUR RIGHT OF SANCTUARY?

MEN, OUR STOPOVER HERE AT SANCTUARY HAS BEEN FAIRLY DULL AND QUIET. HOWEVER, A VISITOR ARRIVED TODAY, AND SHE HAS DECIDED TO ENTERTAIN YOU TONIGHT. MAY I PRESENT...

MADAME LIANA,

HOW CAN YOU GET ME LOOSE?

THIS IS OUR SANCTUARY. NO LOCKS EXIST HERE THAT WE DO NOT HAVE KEYS FOR.

NOW, DO YOU KNOW THE RITUAL?

SHE WILL DISTRACT THE SOLDIERS. YOU MUST TAKE THE VOW FIRST.

YES, BUT WHAT ABOUT LEAHTRAH?

I, THORIN LEONIUS, MASTER SERGEANT OF THE HOPLITE ARMY, DO CLAIM SANCTUARY. I HAVE NOT MURDERED OR WITTINGLY CAUSED INJURY TO ANYONE WITHIN THESE WALLS -- AND WILL NOT DO SO, AT COST OF MY LIFE. SO DO I VOW.

YOU REALIZE THAT IF THE SOLDIERS THREATEN YOU OR LEAHTRAH, YOU CANNOT FIGHT THEM.

YES! NOW LET'S FIND LEAHTRAH!

THANK YOU. I HOPE YOU ENJOYED MY DANCE OF WELCOME. NEXT, I WOULD LIKE TO PERFORM ONE FROM MY CULTURE. A FERTILITY DANCE.

YEAH!

CLAP!

CLAP!

THORIN!

NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

YOU DO NOTHING. SHE MUST RUN TO US AND TAKE THE VOW!

IS SHE... PREGNANT?

HEY, PRETTY GIRL! WHERE YOU GOING?

SOMETHING'S AMISS, HERE...

GOT TO REACH THE FATHER!

SOMETHING'S WRONG! STOP THAT VELITE!

SHE WON'T MAKE IT! STAY HERE. WE'LL GO TO HER.

(PUFF) I, LEAHTRAH MIDDLESMITH, DO (PUFF) CLAIM SANCTUARY. I HAVE NOT MURDERED OR...

...WITTINGLY CAUSED INJURY TO ANYONE WITHIN THESE WALLS, AND WILL NOT DO SO --

OOF!

DON'T HARM HER!! SHE BEARS A CHILD!

...AT COST OF MY LIFE. SO DO I VOW!

YOU'LL NOT ESCAPE TWICE, DESERTER!

GET UP AND FIGHT!

I CAN'T. I TOOK A VOW.

CAPTAIN! HAVE YOUR MEN RELEASE THE VELITE! SHE HAS CLAIMED SANCTUARY!

WE'LL DANCE WITH HER LATER, EH?

OH? AND HAS SHE SOMETHING TO DO WITH OUR ESCAPED PRISONER?

THEY ARE BETROTHED. SHE CARRIES HIS CHILD.

DAMN! THERE GOES OUR FUN!

CAPTAIN -- WHEN SHE DANCED BY ME, I *THOUGHT* SHE LOOKED PREGNANT.

FLINT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO HER?

UH...SECURING HER, CAPTAIN.

DAMN YOU!

SILBRE, BRING THE DANCER A SHIRT. FLINT, WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE GUARDING THE PRISONER, TONIGHT?

UM...ERR... BEDLOE OWED ME A FAVOR, SIR!

HERE YOU ARE, MISTRESS LIANA. SILBRE, ESCORT FLINT TO THE BRIG.

YESSIR!

NOW, LET'S TALK TO THORIN.

THANK YOU, CAPTAIN.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, THORIN LEONIUS?

YES, SISTER. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PROTECTION. HOW IS LEAHTRAH?

SEE FOR YOURSELF. THE CAPTAIN IS ACCOMPANYING HER HERE.

I PRESUME HE HAS TAKEN TAKEN THE OATH AS WELL?

OF COURSE.

THEY LOOK SO SWEET.

WELL, THORIN LEONIUS? NOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR TRAVELS?

YES, SIR.

MY COMPANY WAS THE 49TH. EXPEDITIONARY FORCE...

THE 49TH.? THE UNIT THAT ENDED THE BORDER SKIRMISHES?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

CENTRAL COMMAND LEARNED A MINOR MAGE WAS TRAVELING IN A VELITE CARAVAN TO KLARESH. THE FELLOW WAS WORKING WITH AN ARMS MERCHANT THERE. THE MAGE PASSED THROUGH VELITE AND HOPLITE TERRITORY, STIRRING UP DISSENT WITH RUSE AND SABOTAGE. OF COURSE, WE NEEDED SO STOP HIM, AND SO YOUR RAID WAS ORDERED.

A SANDSTORM STOPPED THE BATTLE, BUT THE MAGE HAD ESCAPED. KNOWING HIS DESTINATION, THEY HEADED FOR KLARESH, AND FOUND A VERY THIRSTY MAGE ON THE ROUTE. IN EXCHANGE FOR WATER AND RESCUE, HE DIVULGED THE MERCHANT'S PLAN.

THEN THE BORDER WAR...?

ENDED A MONTH AGO. THE 49TH. IS ON R. & R.

NOW THAT I KNOW YOUR UNIT, I CAN RADIO YOUR COMMANDER. I HAD HEARD SEVERAL OF OUR MEN WERE LOST, INCLUDING THE MASTER SERGEANT. REPORT TO ME IN AN HOUR.

THORIN. WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN?

IF I WAS REPORTED AS DEAD, I MAY ESCAPE DISCIPLINARY ACTION. IF NOT, WE WILL BE SAFE HERE, AT LEAST.

WELL, SERGEANT, ARE YOU READY TO MEET YOUR FATE?

YES, SIR.

WHAT KEPT YOU?

THEY HAD TO FIND A NEW UNIFORM IN MY SIZE.

HOPEFULLY YOU WON'T WEAR *THIS* ONE FOR THREE MONTHS.

WELL, SHALL WE PROCEED WITH THE WEDDING?

I SUPPOSE HE'LL HAVE TO REJOIN HIS COMPANY AFTER THIS.

NO. THE CAPTAIN ARRANGED A MONTH'S R. & R. FOR THE SERGEANT.

NOW, SERGEANT, YOU WRAP THE CHAIN OF FLOWERS AROUND YOUR WRIST.

ANOTHER CHAIN.

THIS DELICATE CHAIN OF FLOWERS SIGNIFIES THE BEAUTY OF A RELATIONSHIP, AND HOW FRAGILE THAT RELATIONSHIP CAN BE. FOR THE BONDS OF LOVE TO ENDURE, THEY MUST BE TREATED AS THIS CHAIN -- WITH GENTLENESS AND A BALANCE OF STRENGTH AND RESPON SIBILITY.

YOU CAME TO SANCTUARY AS TWO PEOPLE. YOU LEAVE TODAY AS ONE HEART, SHARING YOUR FATE. GO IN PEACE, AS MAN AND WIFE, AS YOU ENTER A NEW WORLD TOGETHER.

HERE, BELDI. A TREAT.

WHY 'BELDI?'

I USED TO HAVE A CARRYING LIZARD BY THAT NAME. IT WAS NICE OF THE CAPTAIN TO LOAN HIM TO US. WE'LL BE IN BENTHELEA IN A WEEK.

HOW LONG BEFORE YOUR PARENTS ARRIVE THERE?

THEY'LL BE WAITING THERE FOR US.

THEN ON TO MY HOME, TO TELL MY FAMILY MY SON WILL BE A SOLDIER.

I BEG YOUR PARDON! MY DAUGHTER WILL BE A HEALER!

OUR CHILD WILL BE A BOY AND A WARRIOR!

AS GREAT AS HIS FATHER, WHO I RESCUED FROM A SAND DUNE?

I UNLOCKED THE CHAIN TOO SOON.

I STILL DO NOT LIKE YOU VERY MUCH.

END!

END OF "VELITES AND HOPLITES" -- KATMANDU WILL RETURN WITH "WOMAN CHIEF"

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BAAH! © CAROLE CURTIS

KAITMAANDU

CUTTING THE KNOT

CASHA! ARE YOU STILL MOONING OVER THAT SCOUNDREL BENJAB AL RASHAD? IT'S BEEN MONTHS SINCE HE CANCELLED YOUR WEDDING BANNS.

SIGH. JUST THINKING OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN, FATHER.

STORY : *CATHY CARTER*

PENCILS : *MICHELE LIGHT*

INKS : *MARK BARNARD*

FATHER? IS THAT **HIM**? COMING TO OUR SHOP?!

LET ME HANDLE THIS, CASHA. HE IS NOT ALONE.

AH, TAILOR! MY LADY WILLOW AND I REQUIRE WEDDING CLOTHING. SOMETHING SPECIAL-- PERHAPS SOMETHING WITH A TOUCH OF MAGIC.

NO, FATHER. IT IS ALL RIGHT.

THERE ARE **OTHER** SHOPS. PERHAPS YOU SHOULD TRY ONE OF THEM.

ARE YOU SURE?

I HAVE NO QUARREL WITH LADY WILLOW. I WILL MAKE HER A BEAUTIFUL GOWN.

AND **MY** ROBES?

I WILL **NOT** TAILOR FOR YOU. PERHAPS MY COUSIN MAXIM...

IS HER WORK AS GOOD AS YOURS?

YES. SHE HAS A SIXTH SENSE THAT MAKES THE GARMENT TRULY SUITED TO THE WEARER.

WHEN WILL THE WEDDING TAKE PLACE?

IN A FORTNIGHT. I WISH THIS TO BE A WEDDING LONG REMEMBERED.

CASHA, WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? YOU **KNOW** WHAT HAPPENS TO HER TAILORING! WE WILL BE RUINED!

NO, FATHER. I WILL MAKE THE GOWN FLATTERING. I THINK LORD BAYLOR WILL NOT THINK OF REVENGE IF HE LOVES HIS DAUGHTER.

A FEW DAYS LATER...

THAT POMPOUS ASS, BENJAB! IF YOU WEREN'T MY COUSIN, I WOULDN'T TOUCH HIS GARMENTS TO **SOIL** THEM!

MAXIM, LORD BAYLOR'S DAUGHTER, WILLOW, IS NOT TO BLAME. HE **IS** ATTRACTIVE. STILL, SHE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO SUFFER A LOVELESS MARRIAGE.

AH, **FINALLY** ANOTHER COIN!

CHEE! CHEE!

THE LAST OF MY MONEY, AND THE MONEYLENDERS WILL NOT DEAL WITH ME ANYMORE -- BUT IT IS OF NO CONSEQUENCE!

LORD BAYLOR HAS NO IDEA I AM NOW PENNILESS, AND HE WILL NOT LEARN THIS UNTIL **AFTER** THE WEDDING.

HE WILL NOT ALLOW HIS ONLY DAUGHTER TO LIVE IN THE STREETS! HE WILL **HAVE** TO SUPPORT US.

XXX

XXX

LOOK WHERE YOU'RE **GOING**, FOOL!

HMM. THIS COIN HAS BEETLE DUNG ON IT! CASHA'S SUSPICIONS ARE RIGHT!

THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

ARE YOU **SURE** YOU'LL BE SAFE, CASHA?

I'M JUST GLAD YOU DIDN'T MARRY HIM!

YES, MAXIMA. AFTER ALL, I DIDN'T TAILOR THE GROOM'S WEDDING ROBE. **YOU** DID.

ME HEART IS WISER, MAXIM. YOUR SCRYING HELPED ME TO REALIZE THAT SOMEONE IS THERE FOR ME. HIS FACE IS UNKNOWN, BUT MY HEART LEAPS -- IN RECOGNITION OF HIS FORM.

NOW KISS ME QUICKLY. COUSIN, AND GO! YOU MUST LEAVE THE CITY.

ALL RIGHT, CASHA. I'LL LEAVE.

AT THE CHAPEL

I HATED TO LIE TO CASHA, BUT I HAD TO SEE THIS!

DO YOU TAKE THIS MAN IN LOVE?

YES!

DO YOU TAKE THIS WOMAN IN LOVE?

NO! OF COURSE NOT! I'M MARRYING HER FOR HER MONEY!

UH?

DO YOU LOVE THIS WOMAN OR NOT?

NO!

COME HERE, YOU.

SOB

LORD BAYLOR! I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED THESE EFFECTS. SOMEONE WOVE A TRUTH SPELL INTO THE GARMENT. LADY WILLOW HAS ESCAPED A FORTUNE HUNTER!

POOR GIRL!

NO!

SOB

MISS? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YES -- YES I AM.

BUMP

MISS? I UNDERSTAND YOU WOVE THIS WEDDING GARMENT?

YES, LORD BAYLOR, BUT LET'S TALK INSIDE. I'D HATE TO DISTURB THEM.

END

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